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SYNDICALISM IN THE LIGHT OF HISTORY

It is mostly in periods of turmoil, strife, and confusion that people care much about history.—WM. MORRIS.

Syndicalism is a new force amongst us. It has been developed in France as a result of peculiar labor conditions and is now taking hold in the United States. It foment class struggles with a view to obviating capitalistic exploitation of labor, to making all industries coöperative,—owned by the workers and not by capitalists,—and to accomplishing this transfer by the general strike or any other expedient method. Its working hypothesis is a firm belief in the right of the laboring man, in order to gain what he deems legitimate ends, to obstruct by any means within his power, the regular process of production.

In the autumn of 1912 there was formed the Syndicalist Educational League for the direction of the activities of both the organized and unorganized workers of America. This is the present practical manifestation of an attempt at precise application of revolutionary philosophy. The league aims at teaching the doctrines of the French *Confédération Générale du Travail*, e.g., the general strike, *sabotage*, and boycott, the organization of the unorganized, and industrial action generally, as opposed to political action. The ultimate objective of all action is to be the ownership and control of each industry by the workers employed in it, with all industries coördinated by means of a Federal Board. The method they are employing in New York is that of permeating the rank and file of existing unions with the syndicalistic ideas. They aim not at destroying the American Federation of Labor, the form of which might well be suited to their purpose, but at revolutionizing it from within by means of educational propaganda among its members. It is in this respect that the Syndicalist Educational League differs essentially from the Industrial Workers of the World. The "I. W. W.," as they are called, have a like objective and similarly, especially in the Chicago-Los Angeles division in distinction from the Detroit body, believe in and preach the general strike, *sabotage*, and the rest; and of course actually organize the un-

organized. But they leave the established unions severely alone, or seek rather to destroy them by building up a rival organization, judging the unions incapable of being revolutionized from within. In addition they believe in the centralization idea, "one big union" for all workers. Pure propaganda and active agitation are thus the items of the programme of this new Syndicalist League; its function is chiefly "to educate the proletariat to the necessity of effective, revolutionary, and economic action in the conduct of labor's struggle against capitalism,"¹ not to attempt to establish a new complex organization but to transform the American Federation.

It is a new force in our midst. It is sublimated Trades Unionism,—dynamic, rather than static.

Syndicalism is the revolutionary philosophy of labor. It has arisen as a synthesis of the radical ideas of the parlor philosophers and of the fundamental spirit of practical revolt against industrial slavery. Philosophically, it is based on the conception of M. Bergson that the world, life, and society are continually in motion and cannot be fixed by laws. A snap-shot is taken; time moves on, and the picture is straightway of the past and not of the present. And so, a generalization of even the most radical ideas soon becomes "out of date," conservative, reactionary, representative of a desire for the persistence of certain institutions. *We* shall judge for to-day but must leave it to posterity to judge for the future. We must put no restrictions on coming generations; our right is self-government, and we must not forget that the right of our children, and even the right of the slightly altered society of next week or to-morrow, is also self-government. These are the ideas on which this philosophy is founded and we can see that their application has much in common with pure Anarchism.

¹ Mr. Ernest Thurstle, Secretary of the New York Syndicalist Educational League, has been kind enough to give me rather full authoritative information concerning the propaganda, aims, and purpose of the American organization. I must admit that it seems to be principally a journalistic and oratorical movement, existing almost solely on paper; but in its transforming function, as opposed to independent organization, this fact seems natural and consistent.

It is now a commonplace of intellectual history that the French Revolution has been responsible for the gradually accumulating nineteenth-century irreverence for tradition, and for the spread of a secure faith in Rationalism and of resistance to oppression. This influence was very marked in both English thought and French thought, English labor movements and French labor movements.

In the summer of 1789, news of the Revolution came from Paris and startled the English court, the English "intellectuals," and the workers of the English nation. A spirit of sympathetic radicalism arose among the philosophic followers of the early Rationalists. Numerous Revolutionary Societies, Societies for Constitutional Information, and Corresponding Societies were formed in London. Yet the mass of the people of the England of the last decade of the eighteenth century did not take kindly to this "radicalism," as it later came to be called. They tended to reaction from the principles of the French Revolution and followed the conservative champion Burke rather than the visionary revolutionaries.² With him they believed, and raised their hands in horror at the fact, that "the French had shown themselves the ablest architects of ruin that had existed in the world."³ But this popular feeling and sentimental attachment for the decayed institutions of other years was ever after engaged in perpetual combat against the heritage of revolt left by the "radicals."

There were Mary Wollstonecraft, author of *The Rights of Woman*, early teacher of feminism and first of the suffragettes; Tom Paine, energetic advocate of freedom, and vigorous assailer of established religion; Thomas Spence, who represented a sort of Henry George land scheme; John Thelwall, denouncer of abuses in the industrial and economic life of the nation; and Thomas Holcroft, self-instructed man of letters, successful novelist, able dramatist, ever ready to write for the cause of stern

²The generally accepted idea of the public opinion of the period. Cf. Lecky, *Hist. Eng. 18th Century*, vol. v, p. 486; W. Hunt, *Hist. Eng. 1760-1800*, p. 330; *Cam. Mod. Hist.*, vol. viii, p. 157, chap. 25; Sorel, *L'Europe et la Révolution Française*, vol. ii, p. 16, 144 ff.

³*Works*, Edmund Burke, Boston, 1807 ed., vol. iii, p. 5.

morality and simple justice in social and political life. Chief member and foremost exponent of this school was a "slender dissenting minister of gentle manners and quiet habits," William Godwin, author of *Political Justice*. He had the widest influence of all, and his chief thesis was the abolition of property, and all other institutions,—but especially property and precedent. He is regarded to-day as founder of Anarchism. But, in his own time, he was considered too deeply philosophical to be dangerous. He lacked the bold, ruthless invective of Paine. He was a "closet philosopher," a "parlor radical," and ended his life under the patronage of the Grey ministry. But, as a philosopher, he yet provided men of action and men of words with the ammunition of radical ideas. Spence, Gerrald, Thelwall, Frend, and Barlow, of the revolutionary societies, all harked back to theories promulgated at simple dinner parties in the home of Godwin. Wordsworth was moved by "Godwinianism" as much as by "Rousseauism"; the Shelley of the *Notes to Queen Mab* was actually proud to be able to sit at the feet of Godwin; and there may be traced in Bulwer-Lytton influences which grew out of a friendship for the pale little clergyman. The spark of this theoretical radicalism, kept alive partially by William Cobbett, later merged with the practical and economic radicalism of the Luddite riots to produce the Chartist agitations; and this was the direct contribution of the French Revolution to British rebellions and popularist movements of the nineteenth century.

It merged with them; but still it never combined properly. It was as if two chemicals were in solution without reaction. The frame-breaking disturbances of 1811 and the few years following were all purely labor riots. The real attempts at radical reform were kept in the sphere of pure politics. To be sure, the passage of the Reform Bill of 1832 and the presentations of the three great Chartist petitions were made possible by a stirring up of the lower classes. In 1832 the promise to the workers was, that they should soon procure the same political rights as the middle class were even then procuring. In the three Chartist movements the motive was admittedly political; and political reform was presented to the workers as a mere step to social and economic reform. But the fine flower of early

radicalism which received its first impetus from the drums and tramlings of the French Revolution has failed in England to inspire the workingmen to violence,—and it has failed because British radicalism has chiefly been of the “parlor” variety, because it has sought to use the laboring classes instead of to aid them, because it has been a movement of the middle class to secure their own benefit and afterwards to forget the laborers. A consideration of the facts will lead us to no other conclusion but that Carlyle was wrong when he said in 1839, “The living essence of Chartism cannot be put down; it is born of the bitter discontent of the English workingman.” Carlyle was wrong; Chartist agitation was but the result of exploitation of this “bitter discontent” among the British workingmen, in order to produce “demonstrations,” even “monster demonstrations,” which should assist in gaining the ends of the bourgeoisie. Chartism was put down, though the good things in their platform have been granted by a reasonable government.

This is the reason why, until recently, there has been no Syndicalism in England. The laboring class has always desired to better its condition; but the issues were confused. From the early frame-breaking disturbances and the famous Manchester riots to later coöperative stores, O’Connell land schemes, Corn Law Leagues, and Trades Unionism, the workers have sought to accomplish their own ends in their separate conditions; and from the liberal parties in Parliament, there have been many concessions from the Government, culminating in much really beneficial social reform accomplished in the opening decade of the twentieth century.⁴ In addition, throughout the nineteenth century the workers were also involved in the continual struggle for those political rights which had been secured by the French in the rush and roar of one great state whirlwind, in “the principles of 1789.” England has spent the nineteenth century catching up with France; and British labor troubles have been

⁴ Hayes, *British Social Politics*, deals with these reform measures. The last paragraph in the book is significant of all such political action. It is a quotation from the speech of Lord Asquith, and he speaks of the Government “conferring the greatest benefit” upon the British workingman and upon mankind: p. 572.

obscured by the more important fight in the arena of politics. Syndicalism marks the advance in revolutionary France beyond 1789. We may note in passing that in many of the British railroad strikes of the last three or four years there has been a decided syndicalist coloring in the aggressions of the workers; and this coloring has been of the nature of a change effected in existing unions through educational propaganda rather than any real growth from fundamental conditions. Until England catches up politically, Syndicalism cannot become as widespread as it is across the channel; and it is probable that before she does catch up, the Liberal Party now in the government coalition will have relieved many of the grievances out of which a syndicalist movement might rise.

Syndicalism is thus peculiarly a French institution and it is applicable only in countries where there is general political freedom, where the workers can be deceived into imagining that the gospel of the Rights of Man according to France and America has been tried and found wanting. It is a supplement to political equality which shall guarantee social and economic equality. France and America, its advocates say, are the only countries really ready for Syndicalism because they are the only ones where the "illusion" of political equality as an ultimate goal is no longer confused with social and economic equality.

Thus Syndicalism, grown from certain French tendencies and conditions, has no exact analogy in British radicalism of any period—the British radicalism until recently has always been theoretically and practically aimed at gaining universal manhood suffrage and at other political ideas and ideals which the French left behind them during the stormy years from the Oath of the Tennis Court to the Guillotine and The Terror.

The Industrial Revolution of our day resulted from a combination of the eighteenth-century Commerce Revolution and the eighteenth-century inventions, substituted the man-directed machine for the man-driven tool, and caused a change in the world's work from domestic and scattered to factory and capitalized manufacture. The laborers thus became mere operatives instead of artisans: they were thrown into competition

with machinery and, when the machines operated by women and children conquered the skill of men, then men became objects of capitalistic exploitation. The factory system developed; and slums marred the cities. Personal interest between employer and employee ceased to exist; and the men lived, and worked, and were paid, from day to day.

In 1791 Tom Paine said, "Whatever the apparent cause may be, the real cause of any riots is always lack of happiness." The change in the world's work which we have called the Industrial Revolution caused considerable "lack of happiness" among the working classes. In England the chafing at new conditions emphasized itself in Luddite riots, and in Reform Bill and Chartist demonstrations that aimed to secure redress through politics. In France the laborers learned that politics, in which they had already been admitted to full privileges, had nothing to offer them, and sought from the start to gain their ends by direct and economic action. And so, most important of all, the revolutionary tradition, which in England had died out in vague radical theories, immediately became, in France, the moving force of economic struggles.

The first union in France, a union of carpenters, was formed in 1790 immediately upon the passage of the law which granted the privilege to men of every class "to assemble peacefully and to form among themselves free associations, subject only to the laws which all citizens must obey."⁵ But, during the same year, again in 1803, and again in 1810, laws were passed which prohibited all such conditions; especially those among workers "to suspend, hinder, or make dear labor."⁶ Yet, in spite of this, there sprang up various trade organizations called "*compagnonnages*," largely of the benevolent type with fantastic rituals, and other organizations, very particularly designated as *sociétés de résistance*, for the direction of strikes and bettering the situation of the worker. These were attempts analogous to those of the English Luddites and Trades Unionists, except that they were movements better organized and directed to more tangible and more immediate ends.

⁵ *Les Associations Professionnelles Ouvrières*, Paris, 1899, vol. i, p. 7.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 18.

During the decade 1840-1850 two noteworthy contributions were made to the labor situation. Marx and Engels, in their theory of the Economic Interpretation of History, emphasized the importance of the workingman and first definitely promulgated the idea of a class struggle, summarized in the ringing words with which they closed the Communist Manifesto: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all nations, unite!" Karl Marx has shown in his book on *Capital* that he knew the economic situation; and Frederick Engels has shown in his book on *The Working Class in England in 1844* that he knew the wretched condition of the "exploited" laborers. The contemplation of these facts leads us to realize that the ideas of Engels and Marx were not mere dreams. They were founded on the most real of all realities, poverty,—poverty in its most awful form and as an inevitable result of economic conditions. It was against these conditions that the leaders were urging the workers to co-operate in battle.

The other contribution was the coöperative idea. The transformation of *Le Journal du Peuple* into *La Réforme* in 1843 marked the beginning of Socialist propaganda, the inception of a communist ideal rather than the Owen, or Saint Simon, type of Utopian dreams. Louis Blanc insisted on the right of all citizens to employment and, though the national workshop scheme failed, the idea of the "organization of work" persisted as a moving force in French labor tendencies. It persisted and, in spite of the hostility of the government toward combinations of any sort, association of the workers was urged continually until the ministry announced in 1868 that the government would permit the laboring class to organize under equal conditions with the employers. These years from 1848-1868 were roughly contemporary with those in which Trades Unionism in England expanded and increased with a clearer consciousness of its function and its purpose. Organization of the workers as a class, which Marx and Engels had advocated in 1844, was in the very air.

The International Association of Workingmen, formed in 1864 and given new life under government toleration, was the genesis

of modern Syndicalism. Three elements were prominent in this body; the advocates of the Proudhon doctrine of mutuality based on the assumption that the workers must achieve their own salvation and not trust to others; the advocates of the co-öperative idea of earlier movements and earlier struggles; and the advocates of Blanqui Communism. It was planned to use the general strike in order to make the workers the possessors of all the instruments of production. But the International did not amount to much as an organization, for its direct influence was destroyed in the upheaval of the Prussian War, the establishment of the Third Republic, and the disturbance of the Commune.

The rest of the history is fairly brief. Before the Franco-Prussian War the means and aims of labor action had been crystallized into certain black-and-white principles. Later it only remained for the laboring classes to be educated to an acceptance of them and for the "conscious minority" to put them into operation.

After the establishment of the Third Republic, organization of the workers was straightway begun anew. The inclination during these years in French history was toward the formation of political parties, as for example, the Church Party was just beginning to become prominent. This inclination showed itself in labor circles in two ways: it helped in the establishment of the associations; and it later caused a division. Some wanted to organize the working class into an efficient political machine; others wished to eschew politics altogether. The first group, called the Broussists, aimed to accomplish their ends through a political control of the established municipal and national governments. The second group, the Guesdists, indulged in politics but simply as a temporary expedient. Political office was to be sought and held by them, only in the spirit of Marx and Engels,—that it might be used as a convenient rostrum from which to educate, assemble, and lead the proletariat. The field of political struggle was to be a convenient rallying place until the time was ripe for more direct advance, until there would come "the revolution which the nineteenth century held within itself." The process was one of developing and preserv-

ing in political organization an effective instrument for future economic struggles.

Syndicalism arose from the second of these groups and arose as the result of still another split, this time on the principle of the general strike. In 1886 the various local *syndicats* (from which the name syndicalism is derived) which had existed as scattered unorganized workingmen's clubs for the purpose of superintending strikes and securing improvements in conditions of labor, a growth of the *sociétés de résistance*, were centralized into the "National Federation of Syndicates." This body was overrun and exploited politically by the Guesdists; but it was intended to be a great fighting machine, an unceasing and unrelenting enemy of capital. In 1887 the Broussists established the first *Bourse du Travail*, a local labor exchange in Paris for organizing the workers in the ordinary course of business and for assisting those in search of employment. In 1892 the scattered and unorganized labor exchanges were centralized under the "National Federation of *Bourses du Travail*,"—a peaceful parallel to the National Syndical Federation, aiming to carry out on a larger and more comprehensive scale the work of the locals and to gain from the government various social and labor reforms. These two national federations existed side by side until in 1895, when they combined in the *Confédération Générale du Travail*.

The *Confédération Générale du Travail* has maintained the idea of coöperation among the workingmen, the tradition of the general strike and economic action rather than political action, and the aim of collectivity. This is the body which has federated the French laborers, directed the strikes, and has ever aimed at an ideal situation where the workers in each industry shall own and control their own production. In other words, their plan of procedure includes the fighting aid of the *syndicats* to accomplish an end of coöperative ownership. "The *Confédération* seems to combine two elements, one of which is hateful and is, also, the most in evidence and the most active,—the revolutionary spirit. The other must be sought *sous la langue* and is excellent—the reforming spirit. The question is whether the professional and reforming spirit can triumph over the other, for

the future of the *Confédération* depends upon the line it takes in this matter.”⁷

Syndicalism, then, as the word has come to be accepted to-day, denotes both an end and a method.⁸ The end shall be a perfected Trades Unionism where, as to-day in Italy in the farming and the bottle-blowing industries, large and extensive plants are successfully operated by the workers and for the workers. Where unions are, as it were, horizontal and combine members of a single trade in all industries, the *syndicat* is a vertical combination of members of all trades in the single industry into a practical working unit—as much of a unit as the old-time eighteenth-century worker at his domestic hand-loom. The method of arriving at this ideal social and economic condition shall be a forcible taking over of the industries out of the hands of the employers, or the peaceful establishment of new plants or purchase of old. As the capital of the *syndicats* has been as yet very limited, they cannot purchase or establish; and so the active work of those bodies has been chiefly confined to aggressive measures, such as the general strike, *sabotage*, and boycott. The federation of *syndicats* now includes workers on the railways, in the iron business, in weaving and spinning factories, in mining, in the building and food-stuff trades. Their attacks have been of the nature of complete cessation of work, the confusion and direct disobedience of orders, the violent attempts to appropriate private property in the name of the *syndicat*. It is hoped by the agitators that some of the capitalists may become discouraged and abandon their plants so that the *syndicat* can simply assume control and continue production.

“Ainsi seulement, pour nous et pour tous ceux qui veulent juger sainement, le syndicalisme réalisera sa mission historique, déterminée par l’article première des statuts de la C. G. T.: elle groupe, en dehors de toute école politique, tous les travailleurs conscients de la lutte à mener pour la disparition du salariat et du patronat.”⁹

⁷ M. Saint Leon, in a speech at Amiens, August, 1907.

⁸ The Congress of Amiens in 1906 voted that “the *syndicat*, now a group of resistance, in the future will be the group of production and of distribution, the basis of social organization.”

⁹ *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, November, 1913.

In this wise has the syndicalist movement gained headway in France. It is the modern practical fusion of the desire of the workers for improvement of present conditions and of the theoretical idea of the intellectuals. The practical view was predominant at the Congress of Amiens in 1906, which voted that this "double task of every-day life and of the future follows from the very situation of the wage-earners, which exerts its pressure upon the working class and which makes it a duty for all workingmen, whatever their opinions or their political or philosophical tendencies, to belong to the essential group which is the *syndicat*," and that "in order that Syndicalism may attain its maximum of effectiveness, economic action should be exercised directly against the class of employers." The syndicalist movement has always retained this practical aspect of a hand-to-hand struggle between Capital and Labor at the very door of the factory and has not been dragged away from its immediate object as Socialism has by the irrelevances of the political arena. M. Hubert Lagardelle, formerly a leading advocate but now out of direct sympathy with syndicalism because he disapproves of violence, recently rendered the following judgment: "It is a sign of force that syndicalism does not refuse to criticise itself. It presents itself as an interpretation of life. It must be moving as life, and always on the level of experience. . . . It corrects itself by learning."¹⁰ *It must be moving*: these words suggest the identity of the syndicalist idea with M. Bergson's Philosophy of Change. *It must be moving*: and it plans for the years to come. "The syndicalist 'charter,' voted at the Congress of Amiens in 1906, was an historical prospect rather than a reflection of the present. It was a view of the future."¹¹ Through all the records of syndicalist action in France the whole attitude has been particularly practical, unhasty, deliberate, and far-seeing.¹²

¹⁰ *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, Sept.-Oct. 1913, No. 244, p. 163.

¹¹ *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, Sept.-Oct. 1912, No. 244, p. 161. Substantially reaffirmed at the Congress of Havre, Sept. 16, 1912.

¹² *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, Nov. 1912, No. 245, p. 270: Caston Lévy says of the Congress of Havre: "On the other questions in the order of the day the same care of precision prevailed and also the same desire to sacrifice even individual preferences to the organic unity."

The Congress of Amiens in 1906 declared that the laboring class ought not to await liberation at the hands of State, employer, or Heaven, but should gain it by its own action. "The accomplishment of partial reforms which create a community of interests and so determine a common inspiration to unite men, bind them together and urge them to the final conflict—the general strike of expropriation."¹³ This idea was renewed at the twelfth *Confédéral Congrès du Havre* held September 16-22, 1912, and this stands to-day as very nearly, if not precisely, the true formation of syndicalist theory:—

In its daily claim, Syndicalism seeks to coördinate the efforts of the workers, the accomplishment of better conditions for the workers by the realization of immediate improvements, such as the shortening of hours, the increase of wages, etc.

But this work is only one phase of the syndicalist programme; it prepares for the complete emancipation which can only be realized through the capitalistic expropriation; it advocates as the means of action, the general strike, and considers that the *syndicat* to-day, a unit for resistance, will become in the future the unit of production and distribution, based on the social reorganization.

The Congress declares that this daily work of to-day and of the future comes from the wage-situation which weighs down the working class, and which imposes upon all workers, whatever may be their philosophical or political tendencies, a duty to belong to the fundamental unit which is the *syndicat*.

As a consequence, in whatever concerns the individuals, the Congress proclaims complete freedom for the members to participate, outside of the corporate unit, in such activities as correspond to his idea in philosophy or politics, and limits itself to demand of him in return only that he should not introduce into the *syndicat*, opinions professed elsewhere. They stand for coöperation and for direct and economic action against the employers—coöperation in securing their rights, coöperation in enjoying them.¹⁴

The syndicalist movement in France has had its reflection in America in the activities of the Industrial Workers of the World,

¹³ *Battaille Syndicaliste*, Aug. 27, 1913.

¹⁴ *Le Mouvement Socialiste*, Nov. 1912, p. 269.

a body which is somewhat akin to the old Knights of Labor, and a branch of which directed the famous Lawrence strike. In 1905 the I. W. W. definitely adopted the present programme, a combination of industrial Unionism and political Socialism. The conception of the general strike, however, differs from the syndicalist conception—the American idea is to stay at work, declare the factory the workers' property, and simply continue on a coöperative basis. The French *syndicats* would resort to *sabotage* or to a general strike. Recently the I. W. W., in accordance with the seeming rule that labor troubles cause continual disagreement and division, has been split into two camps, even two separate bodies, the "Detroit" I. W. W. and the "Chicago-Los Angeles" I. W. W., the second of which is the body seceding on the question of violence and the advocacy of admittedly unlawful measures. Mr. J. J. Ettor is said to have addressed the dissatisfied hotel servants of New York a short time ago telling them to do the work for which they were paid "with minds made up that it will be the unsafest proposition in the world for any capitalist to eat food" prepared by members of their union. He is said to have spoken these words as the representative of the Chicago-Los Angeles camp of the I. W. W."¹⁵ So, the Chicago-Los Angeles division, instead of merely walking out, would attack vigorously, either from within or without, the entire property and the capitalist owners as well.

Both camps of the I. W. W. conceive the present unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor to be slow, out-of-date, ineffective, and even sold to capitalists. They aim to accomplish their results in the Federation and have no fear at antagonizing that body. But the I. W. W. advocate centralization into "one big union" and the anarchist backers of the wage-earners flee with terror from any idea of centralization. So, the anarchists themselves have recently been instrumental in forming the new Syndicalist Educational League, an organization seemingly of pure propaganda. In their own words—they claim to represent "the modern revolutionary labor movement in its aim of expropriating the possessing class

¹⁵ Cf. New York *Sun*, editorial page, Jan. 13, 1913. Also, *Independent*, Jan. 23, 1913.

and of establishing a free economic society based on voluntary coöperation and the principle: To each according to his needs, from each according to his ability." But their whole attitude is one of education.

Syndicalism did not take hold very strongly in England until 1912 when Tom Mann founded his magazine, *The Industrial Syndicalist*, and until the newly founded "Industrial Syndicalist Educational League" took up his work in *The Syndicalist*, another magazine. The idea in England was purely one of education, aside from politics and within present labor organizations. And, in like manner, the purpose of the Syndicalist League in America is to "educate the proletariat" to abolish "wage slavery" and to "substitute in its place a new economic system based on the free coöperation of the productive syndicates." It is a bitter enemy of the "indirect, political tactics and all other reactionary and corrupting tendencies . . . which are so harmful to the solidarity of the workers."

And so Syndicalism, born in France, and recently adapted to England and America, is the latest and the sanest of modern labor movements. It is the only one that has acted with definite cognizance of contemporary conditions, with well-defined plans for the future, and with a certain spirit of self-criticism and self-correction. It is because of this three-fold merit that the syndicalist idea has gained such credence among the workers and is becoming dangerous to the capitalist and manufacturer. Its chief weakness lies in the advocacy of violence, which once established as a principle renders industrial security insecure.

ELBRIDGE COLBY.

Columbia University.